

Discovery House Project Executive Summary 1

CCS Discovery House Project Executive Summary

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PROJECT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ITEM 1: Realized Project Summary & Benefit

This semester our Action Team from the Navy Pod volunteered at Discovery House. Discovery House is a non-clinical branch of Community Counseling Services that caters to residents with mental health impairments between the ages of 21 and 60. Since the residents spend a large amount of time at Discovery House, the goal for our service-learning project was to make the residents feel more welcomed and comfortable. In the beginning, we thought about either purchasing indoor furniture, creating a mural for the residents' art, making a birthday tree, or purchasing patio furniture. After talking to Mrs. Carolyn, the director of Discovery House, we found that the greatest need was outside furniture.

After looking at our budget, we determined that patio furniture would be too expensive and may not hold up well in weather. Therefore, we decided that it would be more efficient to build benches for the residents. We built three sturdy benches that will provide plenty of seating on the patio. Also, these benches should last for a much longer time than patio furniture would. The benches were personalized by painting the residents' handprints on them with craft paint. This personalized touch made the residents proud of the handprint they contributed, and it gave the outside a little more color. We felt that building these benches would be most beneficial to our community partner because the residents enjoy spending time outside. Prior to our project, many residents remained inside or did not Discovery House come out as often due to

complications. For example, Sam has a walking disability, and James has knee problems. These impairments make it difficult for them to go outside if there is nowhere to sit. Now that the benches have been built, the residents cannot wait to go outside during their breaks; just about everyone comes out to laugh and talk with each other! Now, more residents come outside and socialize than before.

The residents always anticipated us coming to visit with them. Anytime one of us visited, the residents would ask us when we would be coming back again. As a whole, they were very ecstatic about us playing cards, drawing, or just simply sharing conversations with them. There was never a time when any of us felt that our visits were not appreciated. Ms. Carolyn made sure the residents showed their gratitude to us for taking the time out of our busy schedules to do our service. We noticed how happy the residents always were, regardless of the situations they may have been facing at home; that really made us feel good and put smiles on our faces.

PROJECT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ITEM 2: Leadership Lessons Learned

This semester at Discovery House was an enjoyable and a new experience for all of us. Our project was a great success, and our experience was momentous. Our greatest challenge was schedule conflicts among our Action Team. Another challenge we faced was trying to ensure that our scheduled visits to Discovery House were spread evenly throughout the week, so that the residents would receive visits from us at least once a day. It was also somewhat difficult to pick a date to build the benches due to the complexity of everyone's schedules. Some of our team members do not have cars, and others have class schedules that made their available time limited. There was not a day where everyone would be available, so we made sure to pick a date

Discovery House where the majority could participate. None of us had any carpentry skills, so it was a bit of a challenge on getting started with the project. We came across a few barriers, but we were able to overcome them due to the exceptional help from our MLP fellow, Karlyn's, father. Even though we lacked a few members of the team on the project day, we were still able to complete the project successfully.

This semester taught us a countless amount of valuable lessons. Of these lessons learned, we grasped the importance of teamwork as well as communication. Without teamwork and communication, a team would not make much progress. Each one of us has taken this into consideration, and we have done our best to help build up our team! Overall, our group accumulated 130 community service hours and we served 20 residents at Discovery House.